

idence to lead persons to repentance, and we are thereby brought to Christ, and on sheer sick beds are led to Christ, and wish to be admitted to His Church, and partake of His ordinances. Must such be denied because one of the ordinances can not be administered? I can not believe that a loving father would make any such restriction.

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## SHIMEI, THE PENITENT TRAITOR.

2 Sam. 19:16-13.

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Shimei's shameful treatment of his king occurred when Absalom's conspiracy had driven David into distressful flight (2 Sam. 15:30). As the king passed weeping, with his head covered and barefoot, Shimei came out and followed him, cursing and throwing stones, and shouting insulting epithets, and taunting him with his misfortunes (16: 5-8). So did the malignants revile the Son of David in his hour of humiliation and suffering.

In striking contrast with this despicable conduct was the king's meekness and magnanimity. When the indignant Abishai asked, "Why should this dead dog curse my lord, the king? let me go and take off his head," David replied, "Let him alone, and let him curse. It may be that the Lord will look on mine affliction and requite me good for his cursing this day." Thus did David's son, "when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously."

Instead of being touched by this gentle spirit, the vile miscreant still followed along the hillside, cursing and throwing stones and dirt. "It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not."

But there was a great change in Shimei's spirit and conduct when the king was returning victorious. He made hot haste to express contrition and plead for forgiveness. (19:16-23). Whether he was sincere or not, his course is an excellent example for every sinner to follow.

### 1. Consciousness of Guilt.

Thy servant doth know that I have sinned." Our wickedness will come home to us some time. "Be sure your sin will find you out." As Shimei trembled before victorious David, so at Pentecost, "when they heard that God had made that same Jesus whom they had crucified, both Lord and Christ, they were pricked in their heart, and said, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" This consciousness of sin and ill-desert is the first step toward pardon. "I know that I have sinned," his feelings, more or less, did not affect the fact.

### 2. "He came to meet King David."

To make his peace with him. "I have sinned, therefore I am come," he needed pardon and only the outraged king could grant it. Because we are sinners, let us come to Jesus, for there is salvation in none other, because Jesus came to call sinners to repentance and to seek and to save the lost.

### 3. "He hastened."

"I have sinned, therefore I am come the first of all this

day to meet my lord, the king." The stinging consciousness of guilt drives me "first of all," without waiting for others. I have sinned against my Lord and king, and to him I fly. "My fault, my fault, my most grievous fault," makes much to be forgiven, and I would have it quickly over. "Therefore I am come this day," not daring to wait for tomorrow.

### 4. "He fell down before the king."

That is the sinner's proper attitude. "Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord and he shall lift you up."

Prostrate I'll lie before his throne,  
And there my guilt confess!  
I'll tell him I'm a wretch undone  
Without his sovereign grace.

Perhaps he will admit my plea,  
Perhaps, will hear my prayer;  
But if I perish, I will pray  
And perish only then.

### 5. He made confession.

"I have sinned." It was personal, without regard to the merits or demerits of others. It was brief, but if sincere and full of feeling, sufficient. (Prov. 28:13.)

### 6. His prayer was a touching one.

"Let not my lord impute iniquity unto me." (Ps. 32: 1-2.) "Neither remember what thy servant did perversely" (He. 10:17). "That the king should take it to his heart." Will our king listen to such a plea? "If thou, Lord, shouldest mark iniquities, who shall stand? But there is forgiveness with thee. Let Israel hope in the Lord; for with the Lord there is mercy, and with him is plenteous redemption."

### 7. He met with opposition.

Abishai protested bitterly against Shimei's being pardoned. The sinner's accusing conscience discourages him; the world calls him a snivelling hypocrite and sneers at him for trying to "get religion"; and the devil is the same old accuser and adversary.

### 8. A royal advocate took his part.

The king rebuked Abishai and said, "Shall there any man be put to death this day?" "If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous" (Rom. 8:34).

### 9. He received the royal pardon.

"For do I not know that I am this day king over Israel?" said David. From the enthroned Son of David pardons are freely issued to wicked rebels. "Him hath God exalted to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins."

10. The royal promise was confirmed by the royal oath. "The king said, Thou shalt not die. And the king swore unto him." "God, willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath; that we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us: which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast."

Sinner, come to Jesus, offended, but merciful and gracious, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin." Come "first of all this day," with full consciousness of guilt, with deep contrition, with free confession: "God be merciful to me a sinner."

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